



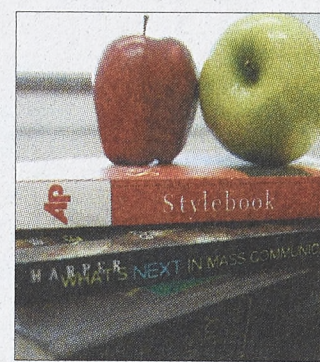
# VALLEY STAR

the independent student newspaper

los angeles valley college's

Should schools raise tuition fees  
to offer students more classes?

SEE OPINION PAGE 3

After a year of hiatus, TAE brings  
back the Apple Awards to honor  
Valley instructors.

SEE VALLEY LIFE PAGE 4

The Valley Star profiles softball  
player Samantha Suarez.

SEE SPORTS PAGE 6

lavalleystar.com

April 25, 2012

Volume 76 Issue 6

## MORE CUTS, MORE HARD DECISIONS

Sue Carleo offers additional information but little good news in a meeting with faculty and staff.

KEVIN JERSEY  
STAFF WRITER

Valley College President Sue Carleo discussed the current state of the school's budget Tuesday in a town hall-style meeting.

Roughly five-dozen faculty members, staff and students attended the meeting in the Campus Center's fireside room to gather additional information regarding upcoming budget cuts and the impact they will have at Valley.

"We've been discussing the budget forever and ever," said Carleo. "We are still not reaching everybody, so we wanted to take one more opportunity to talk about the budget."

The 2012-2013 budget will not be finalized until after the November elections, but it is already known that there will be significant cuts. A proposal on the ballot will determine just how large those cuts will be. If the proposed tax increase is approved, the budget is estimated to be \$47.4 million. Without the additional funds from the proposal, the budget would be about \$44.2 million. Both these figures fall far short of the current school year's budget of \$49.5 million. The uncertainty over the exact budget for next year means that Valley has to plan for the possibility that the tax increase will not be approved and hope for the best.

"We have to plan for the worst-case scenario," said Carleo. "It's really not going to be an easy year."

Some plans have already been implemented to limit spending. While salaries for faculty and staff cannot be cut, a hiring freeze has been put into place. The payroll will be trimmed by not replacing retirees.

Additional cost-cutting efforts have resulted in eliminating most of the summer session. A very limited program will be offered, including some physical education classes and athletic programs. This follows anticipated reductions in classes during the fall and spring semesters, though the class schedule has not been finalized.

"We set up a conservative fall and spring schedule and then will use winter to make up the difference," said Sandy Mayo, the vice president of academic affairs. "We felt it was better to delay than to have a promise out there that we then break."

Students are already aware of a fee increase from \$36 to \$46 per unit to be implemented this fall, but Carleo said there was no chance of raising fees further for certain in-demand classes. A similar proposed tiered tuition program at Santa Monica College was found to be illegal by the

[See TOWN HALL Page 2]

## CONSTRUCTION AT VALLEY IS DEADLOCKED



STUDENT SERVICE CENTER - Construction workers installed pillars to the Student Services Building last week. The project is one of the few that has funds available to continue the work.

Valley is still deadlocked with the Los Angeles Community College District regarding the release of funds for the continuation of construction projects.

ANNE CHRISTENSEN  
STAFF WRITER

Valley College still has \$251 million of its construction budget on hold after Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor David LaVista ordered a spending moratorium during an audit of all nine campuses.

The audit was prompted by a six-part series in the L.A. Times that revealed shoddy workmanship, fraud and nepotism in the district. Los Angeles taxpayers are funding the \$6.2-billion campus overhaul, where spending is earmarked for construction purposes only and therefore cannot be used to create extra courses or employ additional instructors.

The continued delay may cause Valley to exceed the budget and spark a surge of lawsuits from contractors who have seen their contracts cancelled or delayed, according to Eloy Retamal, the project director at Yang Management—the construction company managing "reVitalizing Valley College."

"[The] LACCD hired 10 attorneys ... just to deal with lawsuits," said Retamal. Since the moratorium was instated December 2011, Valley's construction budget is reduced by \$38,000 every day due to construction escalation costs. But Retamal predicts additional costs once the projects pass the 2015 deadline.

The financial audit ordered by LaVista will be presented during a board of trustees meeting April 25, according to Valley President

Sue Carleo. "We're actively pushing for a release, but there have been requests for additional information."

The request was met with a 580-page document addressing budget, space and maintenance issues. The document demonstrates Valley's construction vision, including the decrepit bungalows and the need for funding to be released.

A follow-up letter dated Feb. 14 and addressed to Chancellor LaVista has resulted in no response. The lack of dialog between the LACCD and Valley has frustrated Retamal. "Not one phone call [has been made from the LACCD] to inquire about the case of proving that we've done proper planning and have real needs. The argument has gone nowhere."

On April 12, the LACCD gave the green light to five of Valley's projects but later rescinded on two. Now, Retamal only has funding cleared to start on the Multi-Purpose Community Service

Center, parking structure and campus infrastructure. Although green-lit, Valley is still waiting on an early release of funds to start construction on the parking structure, which is legally required to comply with environmental and infrastructure requirements.

Valley is still engaged in litigation with the construction company FTR International, but the case now includes multiple colleges in the district. FTR was hired under a \$48-million contract to build Valley's Allied Health and Sciences Center. Following the L.A. Times' investigation, FTR was banned for five years from future projects with the LACCD in a ruling that was later overturned by the Los Angeles County Superior Court. It has not yet been decided whether Valley will be involved in a trial or the case can be resolved by mediation alone, but Valley has hired special attorneys to see the campus through the process, according to Carleo.

## STUDENT SUCCESS JAMBOREE INFORMS PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The Student Success Jamboree offered new and prospective students information on Valley College.

EDYTHE SMITH  
STAFF WRITER



TRANSFER - Career/Transfer Center intern Rocio Mendez, seated in the middle, and volunteer Liana Ghahramanyan answer psychology major Laura Tapia's questions about transferring.

Administrators and behaviorists have hailed orientations for new students as a healthy way to give students an introduction to a new campus. While Valley College does not offer mandatory orientations, the Student Success

Jamboree combines several activities that give students an upbeat introduction to the path of success.

The Student Success Committee was host to the two-day jamboree in Emergency Services 113 last Thursday and Friday. Clive Gordon, the director of the Career/Transfer Center; Barbara Goldberg, the chair of the counseling department; and Deborah diCesare, the dean of academic affairs, were all delighted to meet incoming students and began with a career speed-dating activity designed to apply a more intimate understanding of careers, personalities and compatibility.

"We're looking at extensive research of what makes students successful," said diCesare. "This is one of the programs that incorporate various models that have been used at other schools."

The event was advertised in many departments and offices in the form of e-mails, which were

sent to many students transferring in the fall. Approximately 20 students were asked to RSVP online and sign up for more information after checking in. Many heard of the event through the Financial Aid office, including Rafael Cortez, who will join Valley in the fall and wants to major in respiratory therapy. Goldberg praised him for his approach to becoming a new student.

"After I turned in everything into Financial Aid," said Cortez, "I asked if there was anything else that I needed to be aware of, and they directed me to an events flyer where the event was posted."

To keep students interested and lively, the speed-dating activity was followed by a short break, and the event resumed in the Business Journalism Building. Memory activities for reading syllabuses, career exploration, matching education plans to

[See JAMBOREE Page 2]

## ON THE LOOKOUT... TO SERVE AND TO SHOOT

Recent incidents involving unarmed and peaceful student protesters being man-handled by police raises the question if excessive use of force has become what we expect from those sworn to serve and protect us.

ANNE CHRISTENSEN

On April 4, Santa Monica College experienced an unwelcome initiation into the statistics of overzealous and easily threatened campus police. Peaceful students protesting against a proposed two-tiered tuition system were pepper sprayed by police who felt threatened by the large crowd. The incident highlights the disintegration of communication between police and students. Weapons of any kind do not belong in universities where students come to learn, to debate and to participate in peaceful activities.

A 2011 incident at UC Davis involved several non-violent protesters who were pepper sprayed by police while protesting tuition increases. The students were seated on pathways with their arms linked as police calmly walked over and pepper sprayed the entire row of students. Chancellor Linda Katehi said police had been surrounded and had to fight their way out, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Yet a video shot by a student and uploaded to Reuters and the L.A. Times shows no signs of aggression or the police being surrounded.

Police officers have a wide range of weapons in addition to guns. Water cannons and rubber pellets are used instead of bullets to disperse crowds. Tasers use electrical currents to paralyze the central nervous system, which immobilizes the victim. Pepper spray uses a chili pepper extract to irritate the skin, eyes and throat. But there are multiple problems with the frequent and heavy-handed use of these less-than-lethal weapons in confrontations between police and protesters. One is the terminology itself:

[See COLUMN Page 2]

### ONLINE SLIDESHOW



Photos of the Week:  
Armenian Genocide

These features and more can  
be found in full @  
www.lavalleystar.com

### MONARCH SWIM AND DIVE



### Monarch Softball

The Monarch softball team held its final games of the season at home yesterday. The team faced Bakersfield in a doubleheader.

Read more...



## THE VALLEY STAR INFO &amp; STAFF

THE VALLEY STAR is published by students of the Journalism and Photography classes as a learning experience, offered under the college journalism instructional program.

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## JAMBOREE

Continued from page 1

career goals, tutoring, and more, ended the first day of the program.

The second day of the event consisted of workshops geared toward the classroom. It also offered students the chance to sit and talk with various student and administrative bodies, such as the Student Services Academic Resources panel, panels from Financial Aid and members of the Associated Student Union.

Knowing representatives and administrators on campus was one of the most important highlights of Gordon's presentation. With more than 18,000 students on campus and long waits to get a counseling appointment, opportunities such as these provide invaluable tools for those seeking information.

"An important part of success is meeting faculty and administration and staying in touch with them," Gordon said.

## TOWN HALL

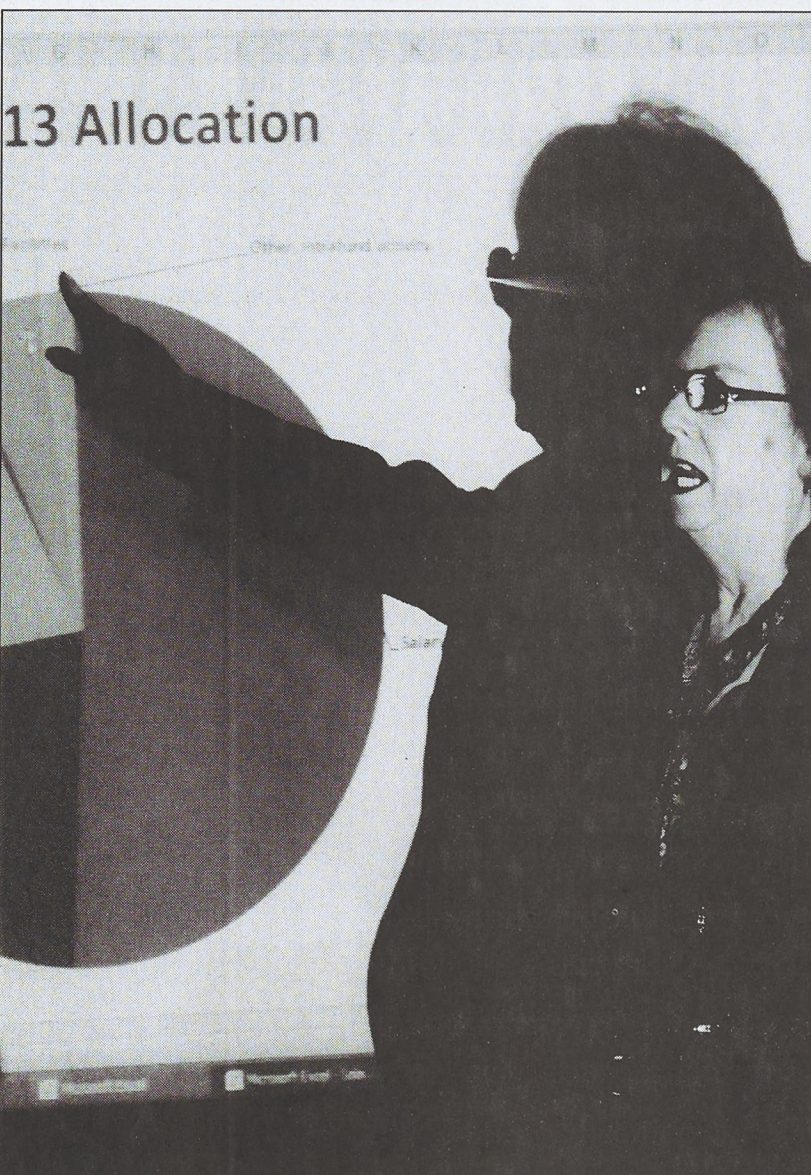
Continued from page 1

state attorney general.

Some fund-generating measures have already begun in an effort to offset the cuts. Photovoltaic systems have already been installed in some parking lots. These solar-powered lights are expected to save \$120,000 per year in energy costs, according to

Tom Jacobsmeier, the vice president of administrative services.

Despite efforts to limit spending, cuts are still necessary. Administrators are forced to make difficult choices when choosing how to allocate funds. "We have to do the best we can with what we've got," said Carleo. "Every decision, we have to make sure that's the best decision."



TOWN HALL MEETING - Valley College President Sue Carleo discussed further cuts the school may have to make, which included a potential four-year freeze on hiring.

## COLUMN

Continued from page 1

less-than-lethal doesn't mean safe.

A report by Amnesty International shows that 334 people have died in national taser-related deaths from 2001 to 2008. The vast majority of deaths—274 to be precise—involved drugs or alcohol, which increase the level of aggression that police exert in order to subdue a suspect. But that leads to another problem: the ethical use of less-than-lethal weapons.

Ethicist Stephen Coleman explained how non-lethal weapons were developed for the police as an alternative to lethal force. But now these weapons are frequently used to deal with all sorts of behavioral problems, such as people simply not doing what the police tell them to.

"One of the fundamental principles of military use of force is that you have to be discriminate. You have to be careful about who you're shooting at. So one of the problems that has been suggested with non-lethal weapons is that they might be used indiscriminately, that you use them against a whole range of people because you don't have to worry so much anymore," Coleman said.

The use of less-than-lethal weapons does have an advantage: fewer people get shot and killed during police confrontations. But campus police should engage in a dialogue with demonstrators instead of continuing the use of less-than-lethal weapons for crowd management. Using pepper spray in situations which may be perceived by police as threatening but ultimately non-violent only fosters more noncompliance. It doesn't allow demonstrators to be heard, nor does it nurture an environment of communication, dialog and free speech.

## THE ASU ADDRESSES BACKLASH FROM ELECTIONS

Members of various clubs and committees attended what can be considered the largest and most constructive ASU meeting.

EDYTHE SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

The crux of yesterday's meeting for the Associated Student Union's Executive Council briefly strayed from the agenda to allow 26 members of different clubs and committees to voice their concerns on the codes and ethics of elections held at Valley College.

Despite the fact that the Election Committee report from the April 24 meeting stated that elections were going well and that no election code had been broken, the public address segment of the meeting exposed a stream of opposition.

"The Election Committee has received a lot of complaints," said Vice President Eduard Grigoryan. "These must be handled in an official meeting with the committee, and those who sent in complaints will be notified when it takes place."

Presidential candidate Shawn Besharaty, who lost to Vahe Matevosyan, was impressed with the student turnout but highlighted several issues of concern from the

elections.

"It's becoming a racial divide," said Besharaty, "...and that's not what it should be. Yes, I lost, but I loved seeing people who wanted a change. Regardless of where we're going or who we are, we need to work together."

Michael Lalaian, the president of the philosophy club who worked the poles during elections, also noted issues of race. Lalaian stated that the tone coming from Matevosyan's campaigners was on par with harassment and largely based on racial allegiance. Lalaian, along with many others, also expressed discontent over the assumption that some of Matevosyan's campaigners were not Valley students.

"I don't think there were enough people watching what was going on. If we have people campaigning they should be our students."

Alexia Johnson, the Inter-Club Council representative for the sociology club, chose not to focus on elections and addressed the council with a comment on its relationship with the ICC.

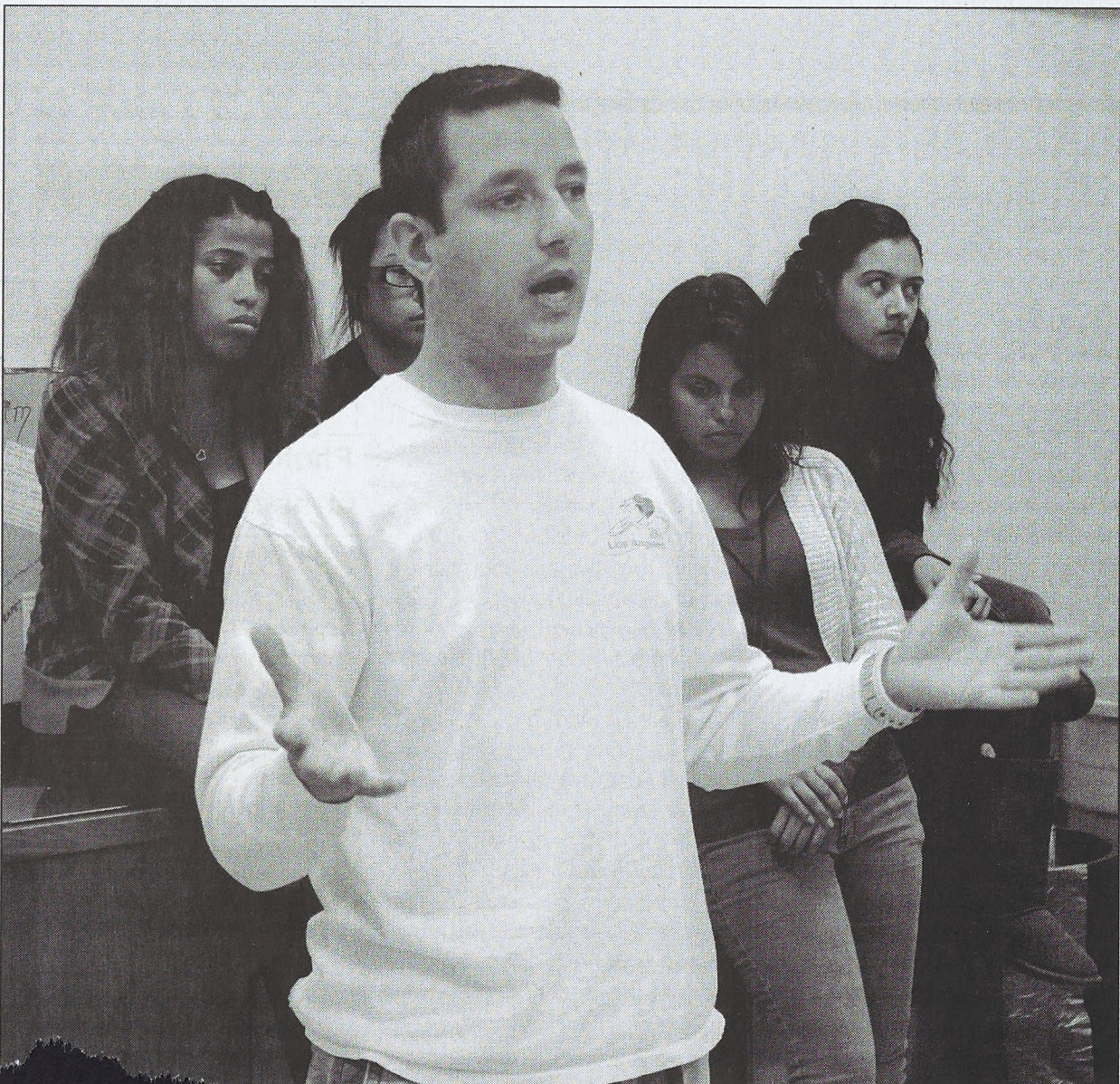
"Elections aside, I feel like there is a disconnect with the clubs and the council," said Johnson. "I know you work hard, but we never see you guys around and it's really a problem."

Remarks from both the council and the public quickly transitioned from elections to the relationship between the ICC and the ASU. Although several ICC members expressed concerns over the amount of communication and support between them, members of the Executive Council were not in agreement, including George Markarian, the commissioner of athletics.

"Elections built the 'disconnect,'" said Markarian. "There were no complaints until two weeks before elections when tensions started to rise."

Others, including Fine Arts Commissioner Ashley Miller and Interim Student Trustee Brandon Batham—who acted as secretary for the meeting—were in agreement with Markarian. According to Batham, ICC members rarely attend ASU meetings, and the flawed communication claim does not put either group at fault.

Those present proposed various ways to prevent future issues with elections by revising the Election Committee to include three non-voting members, according to ASU President Norvan Berkezyan. Other solutions included an increase of ICC and ASU member attendance at meetings and an overview of the constitution and codes.



Phi Theta Kappa President Shawn Besharaty spoke during Tuesday's Associated Student Union meeting about the election and the controversy surrounding it.

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

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PRO/CON

## TIERED TUITION PROPOSAL POLARIZES STUDENTS

**Santa Monica College was ahead of the curve in trying to offer students alternatives for classes.**

**EDYTHE SMITH**  
STAFF WRITER

The board of trustees at Santa Monica College recently held a meeting to devise new options for tuition, and other colleges in the district should start to make similar plans. However, protests aimed at the meeting ended with 30 students being pepper sprayed, and the unfortunate outburst may draw attention away from a bitter-sweet possibility.

According to an L.A. Times article by Carla Rivera, the approved plan was believed to be the first in the nation with the theory "that students would enroll in the higher-priced courses, if they could afford it, leaving more openings in the lower-cost classes." Several members on the board of trustees were frustrated with the negative response from students and the attorney general's ruling that the increase is illegal.

"It's an opportunity to make a very progressive policy, an opportunity to be Robin Hood," said trustee Rob Rader.

The average tuition for an American community college student in 2011 was \$2,713 per semester. At Valley College, California residents pay \$36 per unit, out-of-state students pay \$196 and international students pay \$207 with the addition of a \$26 enrollment fee per unit. It comes as no surprise that since California is a bankrupt state and tuition in its Los Angeles Community College District schools are so low, the funds available are not enough for the demand of courses.

Consider how little LACCD students pay for tuition; the health fee does not exceed \$12 and almost every student who

qualifies for financial aid is eligible for the Board of Governors Fee Waiver Program, which pays all unit costs. On top of that, the maximum amount of financial aid is currently \$5,550—more than enough aid for a working student or one who lives at home to apply toward classes.

This implies that there are thousands of dollars at the disposal of the majority of students who apply for financial aid, yet this money does not always filter back into the college. In addition,

administrators and the government—to a degree.

Working against a viable option to provide more classes for students—albeit at a slightly higher cost—is nonsensical, especially when this would increase the more-than-generous financial support given to the majority of students.

It is time for administrators to draft new plans for education, whether they are tiered courses or a noticeable increase in overall tuition. They would not only pro-

**Offering additional courses with higher fees alienates those already struggling to pay tuition.**

**KEVIN JERSEY**  
STAFF WRITER

Having money has its advantages, but access to education shouldn't be one of them. This is an issue that has recently received a lot of attention due to events at Santa Monica College, where a propos-

ents to enroll in the classes they need. The board of trustees at Santa Monica found a creative solution to this growing problem, but they foolishly followed Sacramento's lead by placing more of the burden on students who are already drowning under increased tuition fees.

Their solution was a simple one: to offer an additional 50 classes during the summer session in some of the most in-demand areas—math, English and history, for example—so that more students could meet their transfer or gradu-

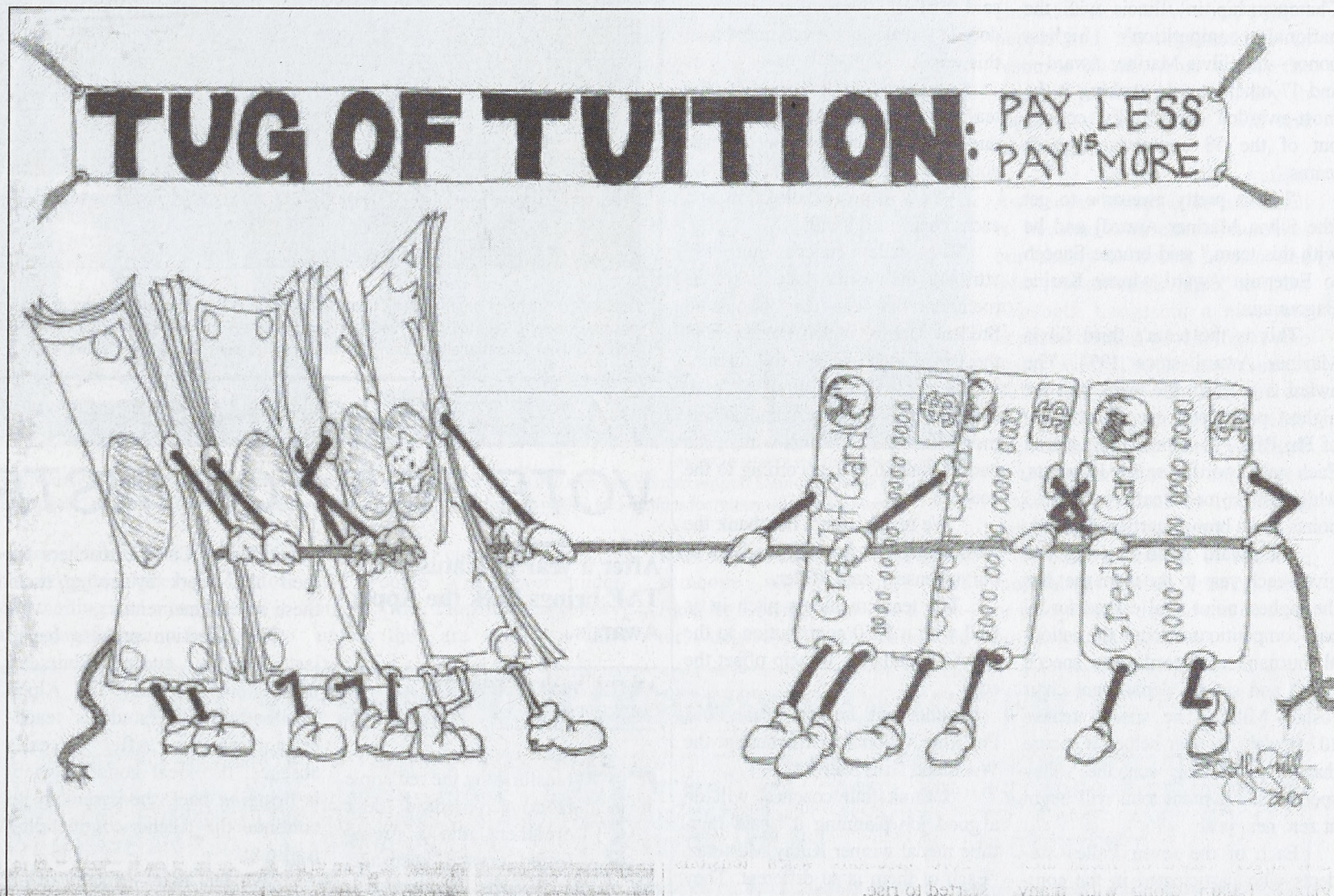
However, many students already struggle to pay their tuition and would not be able to afford these classes, leaving them at a disadvantage. The proposal would reward those who are already doing well financially while further punishing those who are not. Many students were rightfully outraged by this discrimination against those with lower incomes and staged a protest at a board of trustees meeting.

The intent of the California Community Colleges System is to enable anyone in the state who wants to receive an education to do so. Tuition has historically been kept low so people of all income levels can have access to this opportunity. This new proposal unfairly favors students able to pay the higher fees and sets a dangerous precedent, allowing for future discriminatory fee increases.

Even with the relatively low cost of community colleges in California, about 50 percent of full-time students apply for financial aid, according to the Institute for College Access & Success. With the recent tuition increase from \$36 to \$46 per unit, this number is expected to rise.

Financial aid would not be available for the proposed classes at Santa Monica, instantly disqualifying half the school's students from enrolling. Additionally, many students who do not currently qualify for aid would likely have difficulty paying the higher tuition. The Public Policy Institute of California reports that 84 percent of state residents believe that affording college is a problem. Increasing fees would only make this problem worse.

Although schools like Santa Monica are searching for solutions, the education budget remains a state problem and can only be solved in Sacramento. School funding needs to be made a priority so that all Californians have the same access to an education, regardless of their income level.



PAY-PER-TRANSFER - Santa Monica College's plan to give students the option to enroll in more expensive courses to fast-track their education upset students and Sacramento politicians.

financial aid can be collected from students who do not always finish the course.

Every time there is an increase in educational costs, students lash out and rightfully so. These matters are a hot bed for discussion and deserve to be scrutinized by students, admin-

vide more options for all students, but they might also help weed out students who collect financial aid and do not stick with the course. Education gets more expensive over time, and increased or tiered tuition is a positive solution to a problem that isn't going to be resolved any time soon.

al to offer additional classes with higher fees was met with protests from angry students.

California community colleges, like all public schools in the state, have been handicapped by repeated budget cuts. They have been forced to offer fewer classes, making it more difficult for stu-

ation requirements. But since there was no funding for these classes, students would have to pay a drastically higher rate. Instead of paying \$46 per unit, they would now be charged \$180.

For some students, the increased fee would be a small price to pay to take desperately needed classes.

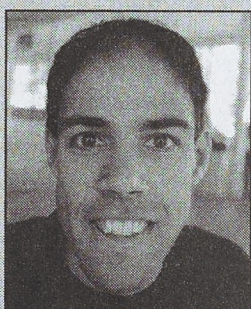
### VALLEY VIEW | DO YOU THINK VALLEY COLLEGE SHOULD RAISE TUITION FEES TO LESSEN THE IMPACT OF BUDGET CUTS?



"Yeah. Those who can pay will pay. Those who need help will get it. I think it's a step in the right direction... instead of cutting classes."  
-ZACK LEVY,  
ECONOMICS



"No. It would affect my pocket. Tuition is already high. It's not fair for the student. The administration should be more careful in spending."  
-DEISY LOPEZ,  
NURSING



"Valley needs to do what it has to do. I support whatever it takes to assist [students] in going to a major college."  
-MARK BOZEK,  
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT



"They should lower the fees because it will help the student get more school supplies and learn more."  
-ANTHONY BAKER,  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION/  
SPEECH COMMUNICATION



"It depends on what it's impacting specifically. If they are cutting classes and raising fees, it's not fair."  
-GABRIELA GONZALEZ,  
HISTORY

COMPILED BY JD OROYE | VALLEY STAR

### CUTTING TO THE BONE

## IN UNFAVORABLE ECONOMY, STUDENTS FORCED TO PLAY MAJOR ROULETTE WITH THEIR EDUCATIONS

**In choosing a major, students face an important decision with lifelong consequences.**

**KEVIN JERSEY**

Choosing a field of study is a big decision for all college students. High unemployment rates and higher tuition fees have made that decision even more important. A recent study shows that their ability to find a job after graduation is greatly affected by the major they choose.

The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce has determined that

employment rates vary greatly depending on the specific degree that the college graduate has earned.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has measured unemployment based on education levels since 1970. This rate for recent college graduates is 8.9 percent, down only slightly from its peak in 2010. While this is vastly better than the 22.9-percent rate for new high school graduates or the terrifying 31.5 percent for recent high-school dropouts, that 8.9-percent figure among those with college degrees is still very high and deserves closer inspection.

The Georgetown study shows that students who choose a major focusing on a specific career fare

far better when searching for a job than those with vague majors like art, social sciences or liberal arts. Current jobless rates for all three of these degrees are above 10 percent. But it is just as important to study toward a career that is in demand.

For example, the degree with the worst unemployment rate is architecture, at 13.9 percent. However, there is a simple explanation. In 2006, more than two million new residential properties were built, but 2010 saw only 500,000 new homes constructed. This sharp decline means that there is less demand for architects.

In contrast, careers in computer sciences are booming, and unemployment in the field is relatively low—7.8 percent. But, the

best job prospects are in two fields where demand will never go down: education and healthcare. Despite the ups and downs of the economy, students will always need to be taught and people will always need medical care. The jobless rate in both these areas has remained low at just more than 5 percent.

Of course, finding a job can't be the only factor in choosing a major. Students should study something they are passionate about. But, with the rising cost of education and with an increasing number of students taking out interest-laden loans to pay for degrees, the chances for future employment must be considered. A study from the Project on Student Debt estimates that the average student

finishes college owing more than \$25,000. Many of these graduates are not able to find work and soon fall behind on loan payments. Others take jobs outside their field of study, and the burden of monthly payments forces them to remain in a job they never wanted.

Before the recent recession, when school was affordable and jobs were plentiful, students had the luxury of studying whatever interested them. That time has passed, and students now must be more practical when choosing a major.

E-mail KEVIN JERSEY at [k.jersey@lavalleystar.com](mailto:k.jersey@lavalleystar.com)  
Send general comments to [valleystar@lavalleystar.com](mailto:valleystar@lavalleystar.com)

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Letters to the editor can be sent to: [editorinchief@lavalleystar.com](mailto:editorinchief@lavalleystar.com) or submitted online at [www.lavalleystar.com](http://www.lavalleystar.com). Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.



## LAVC Events

### APRIL

#### Wednesday, 25

**Blood Drive**  
Sponsored by the American Red Cross and the LAVC Health Center  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Monarch Hall  
(818) 947-2918

**Denim Day**  
Sponsored by the LAVC Health Center and the Dance Club  
9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Monarch Square  
(818) 947-2918

**Free Concert Wednesdays**  
1 p.m.  
Sponsored by the LAVC Music Department  
Performance by the Kadima String Quartet  
Music 106  
Concert Hotline: (818) 778-5633

#### Thursday, 26

**Life Skills Class**  
4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Sponsored by the LAVC YESS Program  
Faculty Lounge  
(818) 947-2401

#### Friday, 27

**Third Annual LAVC Philosophy Conference**  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Sponsored by the LAVC Philosophy Department  
Fireside Room  
(951) 368-8004

#### Saturday, 28

**IDEAS Workshop**  
9:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Sponsored by the LAVC IDEAS Program  
Campus Center 4, 6, 8, 10, 104 and 208  
(818) 778-5569

## ! THINK TRANSFER

### APRIL

#### Wednesday, 25

**UC San Diego Representative Virtual Appointments**  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**CSUN Peer Mentor**  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Undecided Major/Career Workshop**  
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

#### Friday, 27

**UCLA STOMP Transfer Conference**  
8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

#### Monday, 30

**CSUN Representative**  
12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

All activities are held in the Career/Transfer Center in Administration 126 unless otherwise indicated.

Hours for the Career/Transfer Center are Monday - Thursday from 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Career/Transfer Center assists students seeking to continue studies for those transferring to a four-year school or university, to obtain an AA degree or enroll in certificate programs.

For appointments and further information, call (818) 947-2646.

For more information, also visit [www.lavc.edu/transfer](http://www.lavc.edu/transfer).

## VALLEY'S SPEECH TEAM TAKES HOME NATIONAL HONORS

**The Valley College speech team took home 18 awards, including the coveted Silvia Mariner Award.**

**COURTNEY BASSLER**  
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Valley College's speech team returned home from the 2012 Phi Rho Pi National Public Speaking Championship in Illinois with the national competition's highest honor—the Silvia Mariner Award—and 17 other awards, making it the most-awarded community college out of the 58 competing speech teams.

"It was pretty awesome to get [the Silvia Mariner Award] and be with this team," said bronze Speech to Entertain Award winner Karine Bagoumain.

This is the team's third Silvia Mariner Award since 1994. The award is given to the team with the highest point total over the history of Phi Rho Pi's annual tournament. Each gold award is worth 10 points, while a silver medal earns a team 7.5 points and a bronze garners 5 points.

The award is an ongoing one given each year to the team that has the highest point total earned for all past competitions through the national tournament, according to speech coach and speech department chair Joshua Miller. The speech team's 107.5 total this year helped it secure that honor. Having won, the Valley speech team's point total will begin at zero next year.

Each of the seven Valley students who participated in the competition won at least one award, giving the speech team 14 individual

awards. In addition, the team won four more as a unit. Apart from the Silvia Mariner Award, the team also won the gold medal for Individual Speaking Events, as well as silvers in the Overall and Fellowship Award categories. This is the first time in the Valley speech team's history that all its participants have placed, according to the team's coaches, Miller and Duane Smith.

"It's a great win when you have the whole team [get that] success," said Miller. "Normally, everyone doesn't break, but everyone broke this year."

According to the coaches, the team usually takes 14 students; but due to budget cuts, the speech team could only take seven.

"They respected direction and each other," said Smith.

The Valley coaches not only attribute the team's success to the members but also the Associated Student Union, which helped fund the trip. When Smith—the director of forensics—started in 2007 as a speech coach, the team's budget was more than \$28,000. This winter, the budget was \$6,000, according to the coaches.

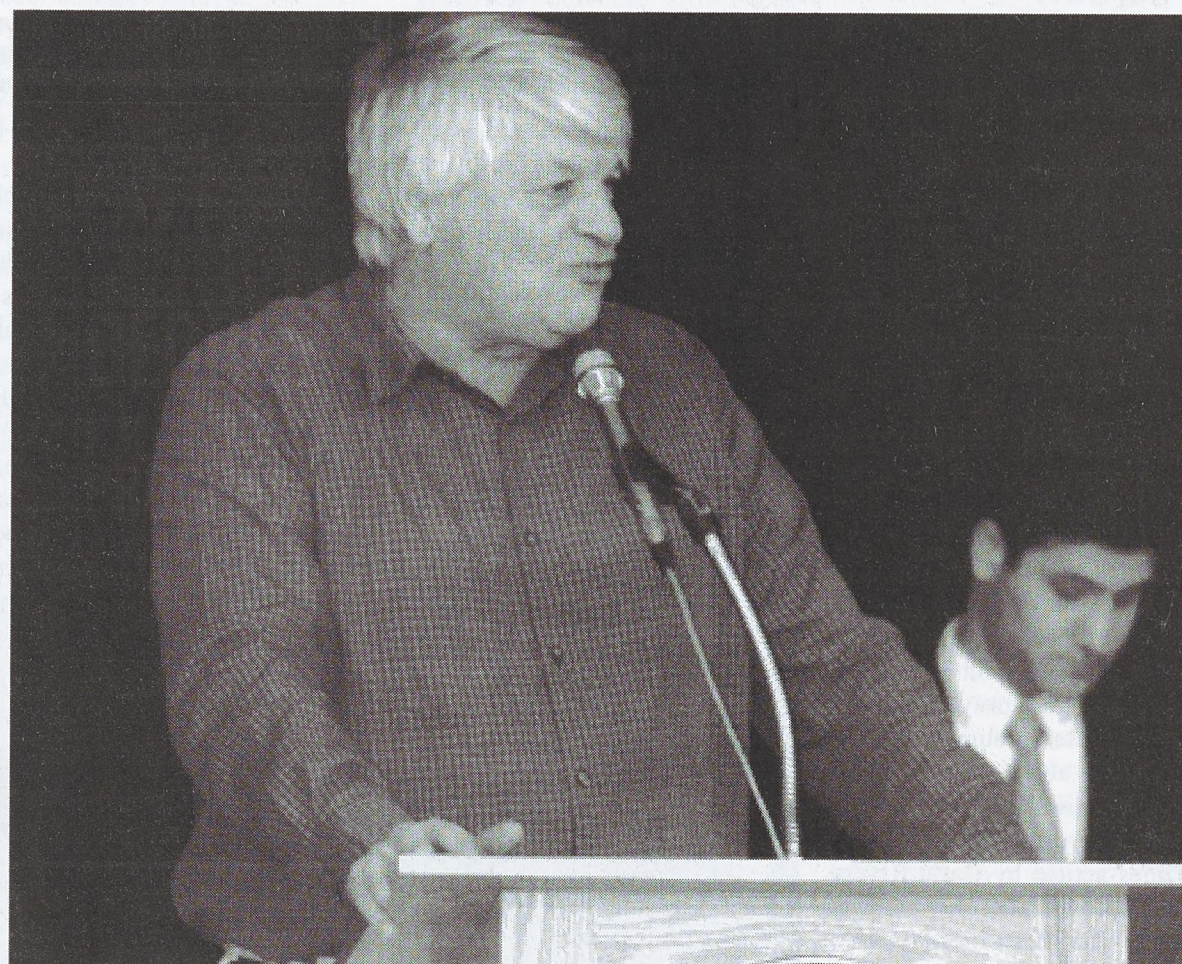
"We really cannot not thank the ASU enough for funding nearly all of our expenses," said Miller.

The team members pitch in as well with a \$350 contribution to the LAVC Foundation to help offset the cost.

Valley will be host to the 2013 Phi Rho National tournament at the Woodland Hills Marriott.

"I think [our coaches] will do a good job planning it," said four-time medal winner Kathy Martinez. "Each of them is so different. They like to have fun, but when it comes to work, they work."

### DEAN'S RECEPTION



ORIGINALITY IS KEY - Jim Marteney, the guest speaker at the Dean's Reception, spoke on Monday afternoon in Monarch Hall about how the students attending the reception should always strive for more and never stop being imaginative. The Dean's Reception honored those who made the Dean's List and the President's List for the fall semester.

## VALLEY COLLEGE STUDENTS VOTE FOR TOP INSTRUCTORS

**After a year of hiatus, TAE brings back the Apple Awards.**

**ARIEL WAITKUWEIT**  
COPY EDITOR

Transforming the red apple from a standard desk ornament into a green-leaved crystal keepsake, the Apple Awards ceremony is returning April 30 to commend

select Valley College teachers for their hard work by giving them these special mementos.

The selection process began last Monday, ending Thursday when honors society Tau Alpha Epsilon tallied the students' teacher nominations. After a year's absence, the local honors society is bringing back the ceremony to continue the teacher-commending tradition.

"We feel that—in spite of all the budget cuts—the teachers do a good job, and we wanted to make sure they know there are students out there [who] really care," said Shawn Besharaty, the president of both TAE and the national honors society Phi Theta Kappa. "The Apple Awards has been around a long time. We're bringing it back because we felt we needed to."

Al Zucker, the faculty sponsor of both honors societies and the chair of the English department, explained that TAE and PTK created the Apple Awards approximately 10 years ago after encouraging students to vote for the top three professors of their choice.

"The whole purpose is to recognize faculty members who have made a significant impact on the lives of Valley College students," said Zucker.

According to Besharaty, past teacher nominations were collected on a class-to-class basis through paper votes. This time, however, TAE implemented an additional voting system where students could send their votes through e-mail.

"Having both [voting] options is great," said psychology major Graciela Jimenez. "I've had some really great teachers. It's nice to let them know how important they are to us."

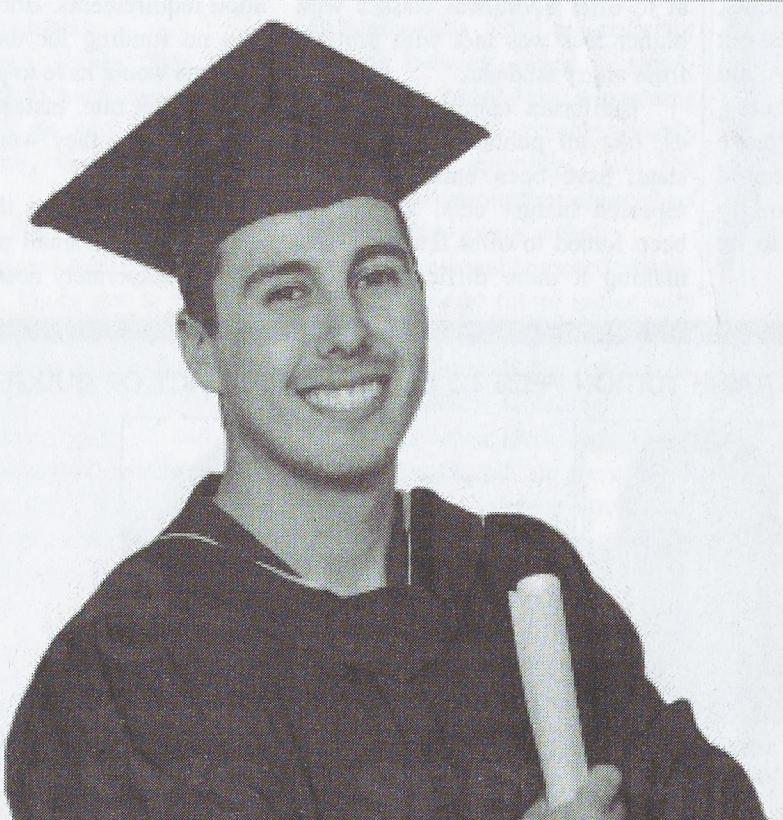
The local honors society advertised the voting through the Internet, bringing more attention to the upcoming event and encouraging students to nominate the teachers they felt left the greatest impression on them. As a result, this year's voting turnout was the most the Apple Awards has ever attained, raking in more than 1,084 individual votes.

"It was an exponential leap," said Besharaty, who expects TAE to use this process again for upcoming ceremonies since it was such an effective voting method. "It's the only awards ceremony we do specifically to award professors through a popular vote."

According to Besharaty, who—along with the rest of TAE—will be host to the Associated Student Union-sponsored event, the top three nominees will each win an Apple Award while the other nominated teachers will receive certificates of recognition.

Meredith Kurz, a teacher from the English department who has a collection of Apple Awards certificates, said, "I think it's nice that the students do that ... I think it's a very lovely thing."

The Apple Awards ceremony and luncheon will take place in Monarch Hall April 30 from noon to 3 p.m.



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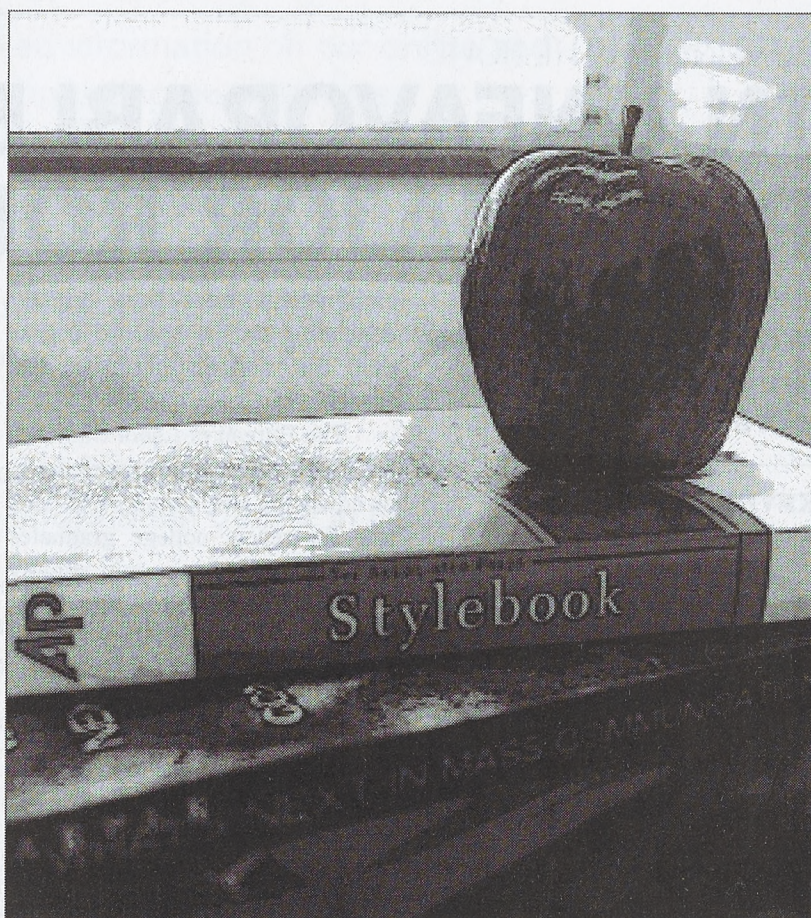


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MAGGIE HASBUN | VALLEY STAR



# THOUSANDS TURN OUT TO SUPPORT AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH AT PASADENA'S ROSE BOWL

The autism community took part in a 3-mile walk on Saturday to support Autism Awareness Month.

ANTWONE MERCER  
PHOTO EDITOR

In honor of Autism Awareness Month, Autism Speaks, 28,000 families and 150 support groups from across the country came to Pasadena's Rose Bowl to help raise funds, awareness and smiles for those who live and struggle with autism.

"This year so far, we have gathered \$1.6 million, which is the amount we raised at the end of last year; so we're going into our walk this year ahead of where we were last year," said Phillip Hain, the west region director for Autism Speaks—the world's leading autism science and advocacy organization.

According to Hain, a new case of autism is diagnosed every 11 minutes, costing the country \$137 billion every year for research and healthcare. And over the past 20 years, people with autism spectrum disorders make up nearly 1 percent of the country's population. Also, autism is more common among boys than girls.

"Education, insurance, employment and housing are tools we have that can help the growing public health issue in ASD," said Hain. "The [Autism Speaks walk] is a vehicle that helps fund those programs and gets the information to families who need that assistance."

While new information continues to come out about the



SUPPORT AUTISM - Roy Davis and his son Malakai Davis are two out of the 28,000 who came out to support Saturday's "Walk Now for Autism Speaks" at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, which collected more than \$1.6 million in donations for Autism Awareness Month.

disorder, children with autism don't struggle alone. A lack of understanding and money make it challenging for many families to

afford proper care.

"People will never understand [the families' adversity] unless they are raising a child

with autism themselves or know someone with autism," said Jennifer Loring, who has a master's degree in early childhood

development and a 3-year-old son with autism. "But programs like Autism Speaks, The Help Group and The Regional Center are wonderful ... programs that really help children with autism grow and lead productive, independent lives."

Events like Walk Now for Autism Speaks, which was held at the Rose Bowl, are geared toward raising consciousness and needed funds for the continuance of further research, early detection and education. More than 28,000 people and 150 organizations in resource booths from across the country participated Saturday in support of the 3-mile walk and fundraiser.

"The reason why Autism Awareness Month is so important is because awareness increases our ability to detect autism and treat it at an earlier age," said Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, a nine-year licensed clinical psychologist who works with The Help Group in Valley Glen, specializing in the research of social skills for children with autism. "What we know of the research is that early intervention is critical to improving developmental outcome."

Those interested in learning more about Autism Speaks, ASD or who want to donate can do so at autismspeaks.org.

## AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER QUICK FACTS

• EXPERTS ESTIMATE THAT SIX CHILDREN OUT OF EVERY 1,000 WILL HAVE AN ASD.

• MALES ARE FOUR TIMES MORE LIKELY TO HAVE AN ASD THAN FEMALES.

• THE HALLMARK FEATURE OF ASD IS IMPAIRED SOCIAL INTERACTION.

• SOME INDICATORS OF ASD ARE NO RESPONSE TO NAME AND POOR EYE CONTACT.

FACTS TAKEN FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND STROKE

## ARBOR FESTIVAL IS THE LAST STEP TO BEING A TREE-FRIENDLY CAMPUS

The Eco Advocates club will hold a campus Arbor Day festival on May 4 with a tree scavenger hunt, recycled art and more.

ANNE CHRISTENSEN  
STAFF WRITER

Emelie Traub, the president of the Eco Advocates club, and Lester Salvador, the Associated Student Union commissioner of campus and environmental affairs, have joined forces to arrange an Arbor Day festival with the arts club to complete the final requirement from the Arbor Day Foundation to grant Valley College an Arbor Day certificate.

On May 4, the main event will be a tree scavenger hunt in Monarch Square to celebrate the Arbor Day festival. Teams will search the campus for the location of 12 specific trees. Each team is provided with unique riddle cards—created by Anne Tufenkjian, the president of the arts club—that give hints to the location of the trees, as well as abstract photos of either the tree itself or something nearby.

"The hunt familiarizes [the participants] with our beautiful campus and the trees which inhabit it," said Traub. "They will end up learning interesting facts about trees ... and really noticing the tree diversity on campus. We have so many significantly different trees that I never even noticed before the creation of this hunt."

The Sierra Club, Los Angeles Audubon Society and Running Tree will also have booths to meet with participants, and the arts club will have a nature-themed Recycled Arts

contest.

In addition, the Sustainability Committee successfully certified Valley as a "Tree Campus USA School," also through the Arbor Day Foundation.

Recently, arborist Michael Mahoney assessed 1,834 trees on campus and categorized each by type, health and maintenance requirements. "The campus has a fabulous species dynamic," Mahoney said, "with 83 different kinds of mostly mature trees."

The tree database will help protect Valley's trees during the ongoing construction and be "a valuable asset to botany students, scientists, and the general community," according to the "reVitalizing Valley College" website.

Traub was elected Eco Advocates president during fall 2011 and has been engaged in several environmental events on campus since. Last year, the Eco Advocates co-sponsored Project Green Challenge together with Teens Turning Green, challenging faculty and students to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Her goal is to "inspire others to want to protect and care for the environment by creating enjoyable events that allow people to interact with nature."

The next project involves a restoration project with Tree People, the San Fernando Valley non-profit organization that works to create a sustainable Los Angeles.

The festival will take place Friday, May 4 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Monarch Square and is free to both students and the local community. The Eco Advocates club meets every Thursday from 2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. in room 136 of the Allied Health and Sciences Center.

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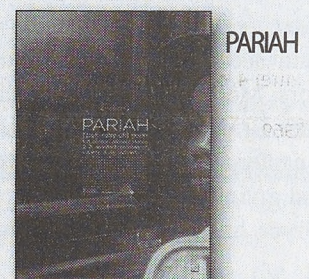
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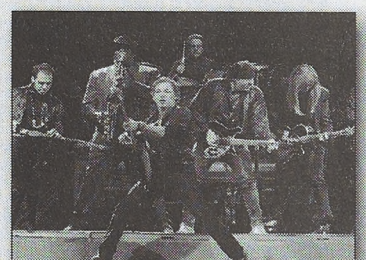
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- ESPERANZA SPALDING: APRIL 27, FONDA THEATRE
- DAVID SEDARIS: APRIL 28, UCLA ROYCE HALL



## MONARCHS MISFIRE IN SWEEPING COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

The Monarch baseball team split a conference two-game series Saturday with College of the Canyons.

ROMEO GONZALEZ  
STAFF WRITER

The Monarchs split a two-game series Saturday against College of the Canyons, failing to extend a four-game winning streak. The 7-6 defeat in the second game of the series gave Valley its 16th loss of the season.

"We were in control [and] doing pretty well," said Valley coach Dave Mallas. "Then they got to our pitcher Cassidy in the seventh."

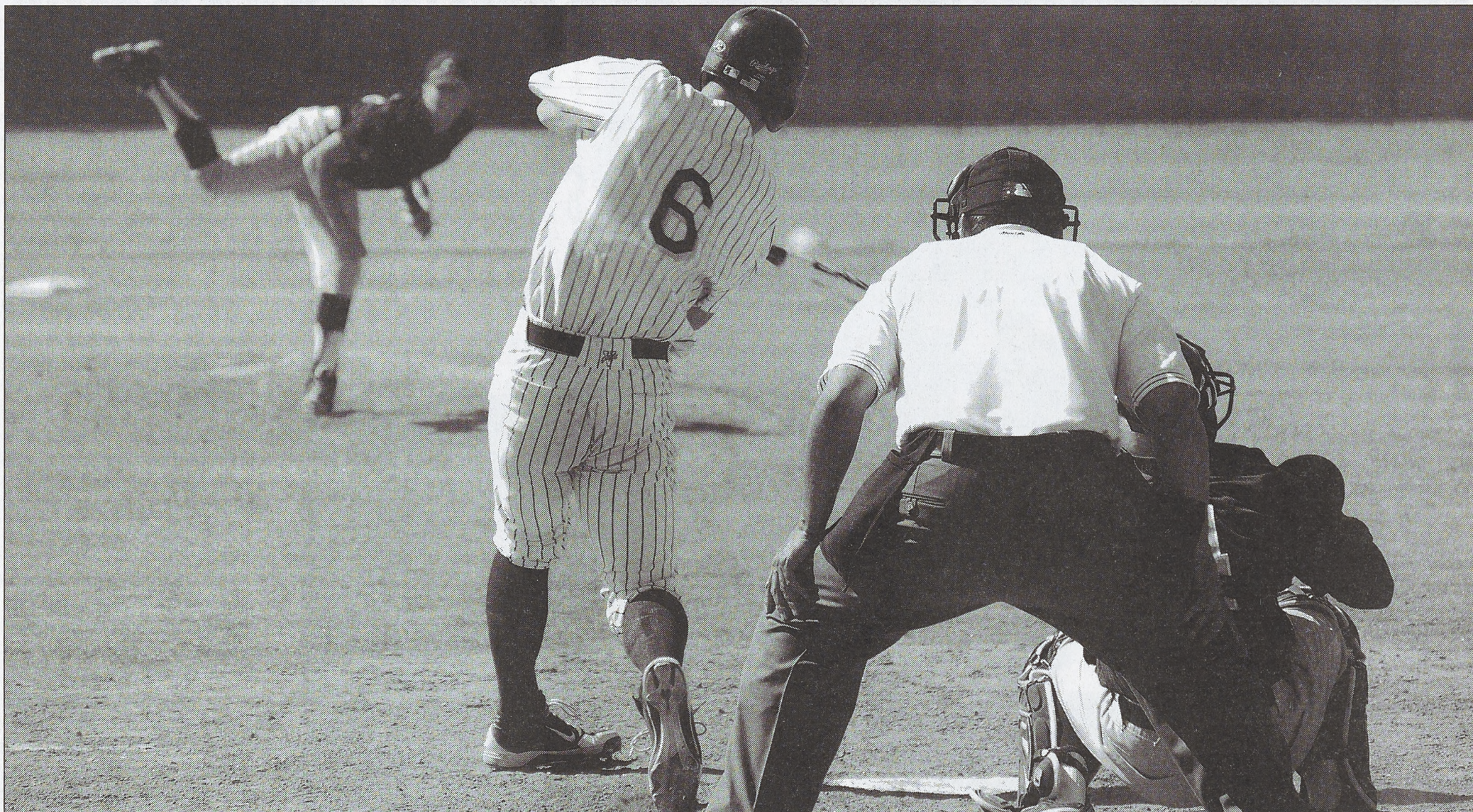
The Monarchs came out with strong offense to start the game. Valley's leadoff hitter, Casey Ryan, bunted and managed a single on the play. During the next at-bat, Ryan stole second base. Monarch short-stop Sam Johnson hit a line drive to right field, bringing in Ryan and giving the Monarchs a 1-0 lead.

At the top of the third inning, Cougar catcher Drew Sandler hit a frozen rope to center field for a double. Later in the inning, outfielder Connor Garelick connected for another base hit to left field, bringing in a run and tying the game at 1.

The Monarchs answered back in the bottom of the third. Valley's third baseman, Eric Folkers, was walked, advancing him to first base. Shortly after, right fielder Marcel Chavez got a base hit, putting the runners on first and second.

Both Folkers and Chavez took advantage of the wild pitches thrown by Cougar pitcher Winston Lavendier, and both of them stole third and second base because of the errors. Moments later, Monarch outfielder Brice Kelly hit a ground ball to center field, bringing in two runs and giving Valley a 3-1 lead.

"Bryce had a big at-bat in the



FULL SWING - Valley College infielder Eric Folkers hit a line drive in Saturday's game against College of the Canyons. The Monarchs split the two-game conference series with the Cougars, losing the second game 7-6.

third inning," said Mallas. "Then he had a chance to put us ahead in the eighth inning, but the ball popped up."

It wasn't until the seventh inning that College of the Canyons rallied and took the lead. Cougar infielder Michael Browne hit a fly ball to left field for a single. Soon after, infielder Christian Ornelas managed another base hit, bringing in a run.

As the inning progressed, College of the Canyons capitalized on Monarch Travis Cassidy's pitching trouble. Cassidy had one strike out in the entire game. The Cougars loaded the bases and brought in

three more runs, taking the lead 5-3.

At the bottom of the seventh, Monarch infielder Trevor McMaster hit a ground ball to left field for a single. McMaster moved to second base after Cougar relief pitcher Alberto Flores threw a wild pitch and walked Folkers, who was at bat.

With one out, Monarch outfielder Chavez came to the plate. Chavez had runners on third and second and had a full count against closing pitcher Justin Phelps. Chavez hit a curve ball into right field, bringing in two runs to tie the game at 5.

"It was a full count, and I was trying to square it up," said Chavez. "I saw it was a curve ball, so I had to keep my weight back a little longer."

The Cougars' momentum carried into the eighth inning where they scored two more runs, taking a 7-5 lead. The Monarchs scored a run in the bottom of the inning but could not take the lead. Valley went 2-1 this season against College of the Canyons.

"Our goal is to win the series against every team," said Mallas. "We had a chance to sweep the series, but we just could not do that today."



SCRAMBLE - Monarch catcher Cameron Doran failed to tag out College of the Canyons' outfielder Connor Garelick before he touched home plate.

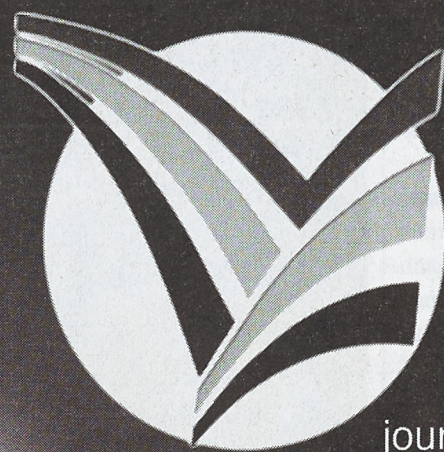
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# VALLEY SOFTBALL PLAYER LOOKS TO PLAY AT NEXT LEVEL ON SCHOLARSHIP

**Valley College softball player Samantha Suarez looks to transfer to a university with the help of a scholarship. Her first choice is the University of Hawaii.**

**CRISTINA SERRATO**  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

**C**onfused and lacking confidence, Samantha Suarez came to Valley College in hopes of obtaining an associate's degree. Two years later, she has blossomed into an enlightened and confident softball player at the hands of softball coach Frankie Garcia.

"I always knew I was going to go to school, maybe [to be] a licensed vocational nurse at a career college or adult school, but I didn't have as high hopes [for success] like I do here at Valley," said Suarez.

Suarez transferred to Valley from John Marshall High School in Los Angeles where she played third base on the varsity team and gained notoriety among her opponents for her incredible skills and athletic prowess. Despite her "superb" athleticism, Suarez still lacked the confidence it took to grow as an athlete and move to the next step.

"Samantha used to doubt herself that she was good. Her self-esteem wasn't high," said Suarez's mother, Margo Suarez. "She couldn't see herself for how good she is."

As a full-time nurse and involved parent, Margo does not believe parenting ends at 18 or 21. So, she refused to allow her daughter to quit softball.

Margo researched several local colleges until she came into contact with Garcia, who she told her daughter's confidence issues to and set up an interview—unknownst to Saurez—for a position on the Monarchs softball team.

"Suarez went from an uncertain meeting to a dominant force," Garcia said. "In 10 years of coaching, I have never seen a player grow so much on and off the field."

Under the guise of fall registration, Margo brought Suarez to meet with Garcia. Immensely impressed, Suarez agreed to join the Monarchs and began to grow under Garcia's tutelage.

"Garcia had a lot to do with my confidence improving. She used to test me, make me do drills in private, [and] give me hard tasks like hit an inside pitch or learn to dive into a base," said Suarez. "I always accomplished the tasks, and my confidence grew."

"Now I have so much confidence, you can't wipe it off," Suarez said.

Suarez just received a letter of congratulations on her imminent graduation from Valley, and she hopes to receive a scholarship. With the desire to help others and dreams of becoming a pediatric nurse, Suarez longs for a scholarship that could, some day, assist in reaching her goals. At the top of her list is Hawaii; however, according to Suarez, she will be content attending any college that gives her a scholarship.

"I always tell my daughter 'You never stop dreaming. You never know, anything can happen,'" said Margo. "I encourage her to apply because she might get in."



**NEXT LEVEL** - Valley softball player Samantha Suarez stood ready in Tuesday's game. Suarez plays third base for the Monarchs and is applying to several universities in hopes of a scholarship. Coach Frankie Garcia expressed confidence in Suarez saying, "In 10 years of coaching, I have never seen a player grow so much."

RICHARD RAZAVI, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER | VALLEY STAR

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## ANALYZE THIS ..... THE LAKERS SIGNED HIM AS AN ENFORCER

**Los Angeles Lakers forward Ron Artest's actions Sunday afternoon should come as no surprise ... it is what he was brought here to do.**

**LUCAS THOMPSON**

**W**hen asked about the physical play exerted during the 2009 NBA playoffs in a post-game interview with TNT, Ron Artest was reminiscent of a harrowing event that took place during a pickup game in his hometown of Queens Bridge, N.Y.

"It was so competitive [that] they broke a leg from a table, and they threw it. It went right through his heart and he died ... right on the court," Artest recalled about the death of a childhood friend. "So, I'm accustomed to playing basketball really rough. I'm used to fighting on the court, and that's how I grew up playing basketball."

The decision to interject this tragic event from Artest's adolescence is in no means a way to excuse his behavior on Sunday afternoon, when he violently thrust his elbow at Oklahoma City Thunder forward James Harden while celebrating a dunk he made seconds earlier. It is, however, a deeper look into who Artest is and who he will always be.

Artest's actions Sunday, which left Harden concussed and out for a minimum of two games, according to the L.A. Times, were undeniably reckless, dangerous and a complete embarrassment to the Los Angeles Lakers. But they were also a prime example of why the Lakers put Artest in purple and gold to begin with: he is an "enforcer."

In hockey, this term is reserved for players who are meant to protect the team's skill players through force. This often includes high-velocity collision and fist-fighting between the "enforcers" from each team. Artest is the Lakers "enforcer," and they knew what they were getting into when they signed him.

The organization was aware that Artest had been suspended for 73 games after the infamous 2004 "Palace Brawl," in which Artest jumped into the stands and punched a fan for throwing a soft drink at him. They witnessed him clothesline Jose Barea in last year's play-off series against the Dallas Mavericks. The Bus family knew he had a history of violent and aggressive behavior, and they still signed and have since

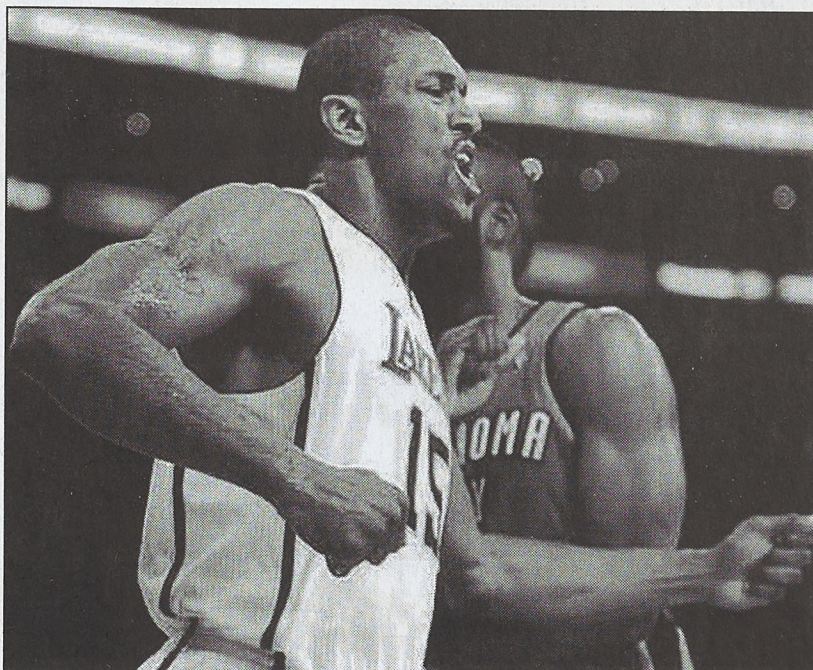
kept him in a Lakers uniform ... because they need him.

Artest came to the Lakers during a time when Pau Gasol could have been doing commercials for Downy fabric softener and a period when Andrew Bynum could have torn an ACL making coffee. The team was in shambles after a loss to the Celtics in the 2008 NBA Finals and was in desperate need of consistent—and most importantly, physical—play.

They needed someone to rattle players like Paul Pierce. They begged for a scrappy player who would sacrifice his body for a rebound, and they wanted someone who wasn't afraid to step in and commit a hard foul.

Artest crossed the line on Sunday, but we mustn't forget who he is or why he was signed to the organization in the first place. Ron Artest, name change or otherwise, will always be Ron Artest; and the Lakers, assuming they keep him on the roster, shouldn't be surprised when he crosses the line again.

E-mail Lucas Thompson at [editorinchief@lavalleystar.com](mailto:editorinchief@lavalleystar.com)



COURTESY OF THE L.A. TIMES.



## AUTISM SUPPORTERS GATHER TO RAISE AWARENESS



PHOTOS AND TEXT BY:  
ANTWONE MERCER  
PHOTO EDITOR

**M**ore than 28,000 autism community members turned out to support Autism Awareness Month this Saturday at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

The event, Walk Now for Autism Speaks, benefits its namesake, the leading autism science and advocacy organization in the world.

The event consisted of a 3-mile walk around the Rose Bowl and a fundraiser, special performances and raffles. More than 150 support resource booths participated in the event.

The organization has raised more than \$1.6 million in the first four months of the year.

"This year so far, we have gathered \$1.6 million, which is the amount we raised at the end of last year," said Phillip Hain, the west region director for Autism Speaks.

